

# Iron *achievers* earn division titles

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BAD KREUZNACH, Germany—Two Iron soldiers are leading the pack in the 1st Armored Division and have done their part in pushing the division to the front of V Corps in retention for the year. The soldiers proved their retention savvy in the Career Counselor and Reenlistment Noncommissioned Officer of the Year Board held in Bad Kreuznach in September. Both soldiers beat competitors from two other brigades and will move on to represent the division at the United States Army Europe Competition in November.

Staff Sgt. James T. Burke of HHC, 1st Brigade in Friedberg earned the title of Career Counselor of the Year at the division competition. “He took on the board despite overwhelming missions and being new to the brigade,” stated Task Force Falcon Command Sgt. Maj. Peter E. Pacyao, who chose Burke to represent 1st Brigade. “He gave 110 percent on that board ... right then and there.”

Staff Sgt. James P. Nolan won Reenlistment NCO of the Year at the division’s board. Assigned to HHC, 1st Battalion, 35th Armor Regiment, 2nd Brigade in Baumholder, Nolan impressed the board members and his superiors. “We [2nd Brigade] chose him based on his high standard of professionalism and his management of the retention program for 1-35 Armor,” said Sgt. 1st Class Carlos Crespo, senior career counselor, 2nd Brigade.

Burke stated his knowledge comes from the double effort he and other career counselors have put forth in recent years. “The biggest reason for the tough retention mission is a booming civilian economy,”



## Staff Sgt. James Burke Career Counselor of the Year

explained Burke. “We are selling a way of life ... trying to give the soldiers something more attractive with better benefits than what they can get on the outside.”

Nolan agreed with Burke about the ever-increasing mission demands of retention. “We try to present the best image that we can [to the soldiers]. We sell the Army. I just try to do the best I can and keep the soldiers informed at all times.”

“Everyone is doing more with less,” Burke continued. “Retention starts the day that the soldier arrives in the unit. Everyone in every unit is responsible for the retention of the soldiers. We need all the leaders and soldiers in a unit to think about [retention] — as much as the leaders need us working in [retention].”

Nolan and Burke were chosen by their brigades for the division competition. At the board, they were expected to give a two-to-three-minute dissertation on a book of military history. Following their presentations, Nolan and Burke answered questions from the board

## Staff Sgt. James Nolan Reenlistment NCO of the Year

members ranging from regular and Reserve army retention program regulations to situational questions on such topics as equal opportunity and military education programs. Board members graded them on professionalism, military bearing, presentation of the answer and creativity of solutions within regulations.

Sgt. Maj. George W. Stapleton, Jr., command career counselor for the 1st Armored Division and senior board member summed up his observations. “It has to be good for the Army and good for the soldier. And that’s what we need to be doing [in retention]. Anything less is just unprofessional.”

While the upcoming USAREUR competition is the final level for reenlistment representative Staff Sgt. Nolan, it is only another step up the ladder for career counselor Burke. If Burke wins the USAREUR board, he will go on to Washington, D.C. where he will represent the division in the Secretary of the Army’s Career Counselor board later this year.